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AN UNUSUAL DEATH OF A NESTING GOLDEN EAGLE

On 16 May 1991, while flying nesting surveys for Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) in Sheridan County, Wyoming, we observed a dead adult eagle in a nest. The nest site was located in a shallow cave of a clay bank approximately 200 m above Big Goose Creek, west of Sheridan, Wyoming, and had been active for at least 10 years. Closer inspection of the nest from the ground showed that a large rock measuring 71 cm × 43 cm × 28 cm and weighing approximately 45 kg had broken loose from the clay bank directly above the nest and fallen over the torso of the incubating bird. The dead eagle was an adult female that had been banded near the nest in February 1988. Remnants of one egg were found under her body. We estimated that the bird died in late April following a series of wet snowstorms, which contributed to loosening the rock from the bank. The rock was removed from the nest so that the site could be used again in future years. Incidents of this type are undoubtedly rare throughout the entire range of the Golden Eagle. However, mortality associated with the erosion of banks supporting nests may be common in parts of Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska where Golden Eagles use creek banks as nest sites.—**Robert L. Phillips and John L. Cummings**, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 25266, Denver, CO 80225-0266. **John D. Berry**, Kiewit Mining Group, Inc., P.O. Box 3049, Sheridan, WY 82801.